

## Bench Tests

# Revisionary Electrics

## Hamer 25th Anniversary

By Joe Gore

As different as they look and sound, the G&L Comanche and the Hamer 25th Anniversary were conceived in a similar spirit. Both are inspired by vintage axes, yet neither is a mere copycat. Each addresses traditional complaints about the instruments on which they're modeled without losing sight of the attributes that turned the originals into classics. They offer mirror-image refinements: The Comanche is a Strat-style ax with low-end punch, and the 25th Anniversary is a Les Paul derivative with an airy high-end response.

### Hamer 25th Anniversary

Another beautifully made bargain, the 25th Anniversary (\$1,299), borrows the dual-humbuckers, Tune-o-matic bridge, and stop tailpiece of a Gibson Les Paul, and the signature double cutaway of a Les Paul Junior. But the f-hole side of the Anniversary's mahogany body is hollowed out, making the guitar noticeably lighter and brighter sounding than a traditional Les Paul. Because of its lightweight body, however, the Anniversary is a tad neck-heavy. When playing standing up, you may need to support the neck with your playing hand.

Detail work on the Hamer is excellent. The cherry finish is flawless. The tallish, narrow frets are immaculate. The neck's clubby, vintage-style feel encourages articulation and detail from your fingers, and lets you really get underneath the notes.

**Sounds.** You can really hear the effect of the chambered body. The Anniversary has more snap than a Paul, yet it imparts a similar degree of sonic heft—you always feel that you're playing a big, solid piece of wood. The pickups, too,

strike a great balance between heaviness and definition. There's no shortage of chunk and sustain, yet cleaner tones have a nice, airy sparkle.

The combined-pickup setting yields acoustic-like transparency—especially when you roll back the volume controls. Distorted tones are intricately textured, with lots of furri-ness and sax-like push. Turning down the tone knob yields bold, reedy colors. The Anniversary never gets shrill or overbearing. No matter how extreme the amp settings, there's always something rounded and sweet about the tones.

The Anniversary looks, feels, and sounds great. You'll have a hard time finding a better American-made dual humbucker guitar at the price. (Single-coil fans may also want to audition the \$1,299 Hamer Vanguard model, which sports a silver metalflake finish and P-90 pickups.)

**HAMER** USA  
GUITARS



### THE RATE-O-METER



### THE RATINGS GAME

	Tone	Playability	Workmanship	Hardware	Vibe	Value
Hamer 25th Anniversary	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★